

Companies & Markets

Company news, analysis and insights

MANUFACTURING

Philip Morris shareholders meet as product consumption volume rises 4%

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Shareholders of Philip Morris International (PMI), producers of the Marlboro, Merit, Parliament and Virginia Slims brands of cigarette, marketed in Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East, Asia, and Latin America, met recently to discuss the company's development and business transactions.

The company's annual report indicated that from 2007 to 2008, its products consumption volume slumped by 5.5 percent in the European Union, the same report showed that the consumption volume in Africa jumped by 4.4 percent, Asia increased by 5.8

percent, Latin America by 11 percent, and 4.4 percent in Eastern Europe.

Also, the PMI's Operating Companies Income (OCI) from the EU decreased from 47.1 percent to 46.2 percent, while Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa, climbed 30.4 percent from 27.3 percent, making these regions the fastest growing in terms of profits.

Matthew L. Myers, president of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, noted that "PMI's market growth was being achieved largely due to aggressive and deceptive marketing activities that were no longer tolerated in the United States, where the shareholders meeting

took place."

Myers advised governments of nations where PMI operates, to examine the true health and economic harms inflicted by the big international tobacco companies, and adopt policies known to reduce tobacco use.

In the same vein, programme manager of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria, Akinbode Oluwafemi, advised that the 2008 annual report from the PMI should be a wakeup call to African governments and other developing nations that have been deliberately targeted by tobacco industries, maintaining that tobacco control policies should be strengthened to nip in the bud the

gale of tobacco-induced deaths unleashed on the world.

"The report tells of the deliberate and misleading marketing of an instrument of death to developing world in the guise of criminal profits," he lamented.

PMI's growth was linked to several marketing tactics, which included aggressive targeting of young men and women throughout the world; engagement in so-called corporate social responsibility, philanthropy efforts in about 50 countries in 2008, and a fraudulent marketing of 'low tar' products from US to 20 markets throughout the world.

AVIATION

Airline Services reports N3.6 billion profit

DANIEL OBI

Airline Services (AS) Logistics (ASL) has posted a profit from its N2.07 billion for December 2008, representing an increase of 3.74 percent over the result, to an increase of over N3.6 billion.

In a statement announcing this development, head office, Muritala Hammed Airport, Richard Akerele, CEO of line Services & Logistics stated that "we are pleased to record a slight increase in turnover despite a decrease in a number of lines' operations in 2008, and a deteriorating economic environment.

Explaining further, CEO noted that re-